

COVID-19 Surges: FAQs & Resources for California

Hospitals *(Updated 11/22/21)*

Communities with low vaccination rates, waning immunity, and indoor gatherings pose the potential for future surges of patients with COVID-19 who need hospital care. As hospitals and health systems continue to care for patients during this pandemic, the following FAQs and links are designed to help inform your surge response to challenges such as staffing and space. The [CHA COVID-19 web page](#), which includes all the information below, also offers additional FAQs.

Staffing

How can we obtain additional staff?

A: Hospitals that cannot obtain sufficient nurses or other personnel through their contracted staffing agencies can submit a resource request for staff to their [Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator](#).

The state continues to contract directly with staffing agencies and may be able to provide your hospital with staff. These would be provided through a Memorandum of Understanding, under which the state provides the staff and the hospital reimburses the state for the cost of the staff.

Are out-of-state medical personnel still able to practice in California?

A: Yes, the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) continues to approve out-of-state medical personnel to practice in California. All previously approved out-of-state authorizations were extended to March 31, 2022. For details, see EMSA's [COVID-19 website](#) under "Authorization of Out-Of-State Medical Personnel."

Space

What flexibilities for use of space and other CDPH requirements do hospitals have during the COVID-19 state of emergency?

A: Until March 31, 2022, hospitals continue to be able to use the flexibilities in [All Facilities Letter \(AFL\) 20-26.11](#), related to the use of space.

Paramedic Scope of Practice

Is the paramedic scope of practice still in effect?

A: Yes, emergency medical services (EMS) personnel can continue the following scopes of practice in local EMS agencies that choose to continue utilization of these:

- Paramedic licensees are authorized to transport patients to medical facilities other than acute care hospitals when approved by the EMS Authority.
- Emergency medical technician, advanced emergency medical technician, and paramedic personnel continue to be authorized to provide services in any setting.

Additional Resources

- [Checklist for Activating an Emergency Operations Plan](#)